

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 09285 221555Z
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9955
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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 9285

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, TU, CY
SUBJECT: ECEVIT INTERVIEW IN NEW YORK TIMES

1. IN CALL DEC. 21 ON REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) DEPUTY
SECGEN HASAN ESAT ISIK, WHO IS RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT'S PRINCIPAL
ADVISOR FOR FOREIGN AND DEFENSE AFFAIRS, POLCOUNS RAISED SUBJECT
OF ECEVIT'S RECENT INTERVIEW WITH NEW YORK TIMES CORRES-
PONDENT NICHOLAS GAGE. POLCOUNS SAID HE BELIEVED ECEVIT'S
INTEREST IN SEEKING A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT HAD CLEARLY MADE A GOOD
IMPRESSION IN WASHINGTON AND ELSEWHERE, BUT HE WAS CONCERNED
ABOUT ECEVIT'S REMARKS ON RESETTLING VAROSHA, WHICH NOT ONLY COULD
REDUCE ECEVIT'S FREEDOM OF MANEUVER IF HE BECAME PRIMIN BUT ALSO
WEAKENED TURKEY'S CASE IN WASHINGTON. HE COUNSELLED AGAINST ANY
REPETITION OF THE VAROSHA STATEMENT.

2. ISIK'S RESPONSE, WHICH HE ASKED BE KEPT "CONFIDENTIAL", WAS
THAT ECEVIT'S AIM WAS NOT TO PUT VAROSHA IN TURKEY'S POCKET BUT
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PAGE 02 ANKARA 09285 221555Z

TO TAKE IT OUT OF THE GREEK CYPRIOTS' POCKET AND PUT IT BACK ON
THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. ECEVIT WAS CONCERNED, HE SAID, BY THE
INTERNATIONALLY HELD ASSUMPTION THAT IN A CYPRUS TERRITORIAL
SETTLEMENT, VAROSHA WOULD NECESSARILY BE GIVEN TO THE GREEK
CYPRIOTS WITHOUT THEIR HAVING TO BARGAIN FOR IT. ECEVIT WANTED
TURKEY'S CLAIM TO VAROSHA MADE CREDIBLE SO THAT THE GREEK
CYPRIOTS WOULD HAVE TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY IF THEY WANTED IT.

POLCOUNS SAID HE WOULD REPORT THAT EXPLANATION, BUT REPEATED HIS ADVICE AGAINST RESTATING ECEVIT'S VAROSHA POSITION.

3. OTHER TOPICS DISCUSSED ARE BEING REPORTED IN SEPTELS.

4. COMMENT: ISIK'S EXPLANATION FALLS SHORT OF CLARIFYING WHY ECEVIT INSISTED THAT VAROSHA SHOULD BE RESETTLED, BUT IT IS NEVERTHELESS WORTH A SECOND LOOK. IT MAY BE REALISTIC FOR ECEVIT TO ASSUME THAT IF HE BECOMES PRIMIN, HE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO COUNT ON WINNING SUPPORT FOR LARGE TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS IN CYPRUS ASIDE FROM VAROSHA, AND HE THEREFORE CAN INCREASE THE CHANCES OF REACHING A SETTLEMENT IF HE MEANWHILE RAISES THE VALUE OF VAROSHA AS A BARGAINING CHIP. WE SUSPECT, HOWEVER, THAT OTHER CONSIDERATIONS WERE ALSO INVOLVED (ALTHOUGH THIS TIME, SINCE THE STATEMENT WAS CLEARLY MADE FOR INTERNATIONAL CONSUMPTION AND OCCURRED AFTER THE LOCAL ELECTIONS, WE WOULD DISCOUNT DOMESTIC POLITICAL OBJECTIVES AS A FACTOR). ONE CONSIDERATION THAT OCCURS TO US IS THAT ECEVIT MAY BE CONCERNED THAT HIS INTERNATIONAL IMAGE AS "THE TURKISH LEADER WHO COULD SETTLE THE CYPRUS PROBLEM" COULD BE A NEGOTIATING HANDICAP, INFLUENCING BOTH THE GREEK SIDE AND THE U.S. TO EXPECT MORE CONCESSIONS FROM HIM THAT HE WANTS TO GIVE. THUS HIS NEW YORK TIMES STATEMENT COULD HAVE BEEN AIMED AT TOUGHENING THAT IMAGE. WHATEVER HIS REASONS, WE WILL CONTINUE TO USE APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITIES TO URGE THAT HE STICK TO A POSITIVE LINE AND STOP PUSHING FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF VAROSHA. WE WILL SUGGEST TO THE BRITISH AND WEST GERMAN EMBASSIES THAT

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PAGE 03 ANKARA 09285 221555Z

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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